

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** April 30, 2015

**Meeting # 203**

**Project:** Greenspring Station PUD - Skyview Townhouses

**Phase:** Discussion

**Location:** Hoes Heights Neighborhood, North Baltimore

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**PRESENTATION:**

Laurie Feinberg, of the City Planning Department gave an overview of the history of the site and its surroundings and presented plans previously approved PUD for the site. Owner Mark Manzo and Kaz Watanbe of Richmond American Homes reviewed the current plans in detail and described the recent neighborhood concerns with the project. The discussion centered on the proximity of the development to the adjacent primarily 2 story neighborhood environment and the relationship of some units to the existing wooded border conditions.

**Comments from the Panel:**

Although some concern was voiced regarding the somewhat suburban nature of the development layout with its parking spaces and garages as the street face, there was acknowledgement that the current proposal was in keeping with previous approvals. Primary among the concerns of the Panel is the potential deleterious affect of the development on the existing landscape edge against the neighboring community. Additionally, the Panel suggests that concerns of the neighbors regarding scale, height and material compatibility be addressed through modifications to the current design:

1. **Existing landscaped edge** – The Panel voiced concern about the proximity and the construction impact of the group of units closest to the adjoining forest conservation area. Special construction and grading care will be required to avoid an adverse effect on the viability of the existing mature trees. Suggestions for dealing with this condition included increasing the distance between the rear walls of these units and the landscape buffer; eliminating the option for the “add-on” plan extensions in this area; or redesigning these units with less overall depth. It was also suggested that at least one unit might be eliminated from the corner grouping closest to the adjoining neighborhood.
2. **Rear façade enhancements** – the developer should investigate ways to reduce the impact of the tall continuous facade along the long rear face of the project such as pushing back the top floor, introducing more of a variety of materials or colors, provide more fluctuation and relief on this long façade, and introducing masonry on the base level to reduce the amount of vinyl siding and better tie into the ground plane and the dominant look of the neighborhood.
3. **Top Floor Treatment** – On both the front and rear facades seek to reduce the apparent height of the units by treating the top floor differently utilizing change of materials (preferably lighter in color) setbacks, planters, balconies or rails. Perhaps some units would not have the top floor at all.
4. **Front façade enhancements**- the design team should investigate ways to simplify some of the material details within the front elevations including revisiting the traditional ‘stone’ cornice on the brick portions of the façade in favor of a more contemporary cap to the masonry. There is concern regarding the bank brick façade treatment in Elevation model ‘A’ at the second level as well as the slight imbalance of the vinyl plane in Elevation ‘B’ where the double window with metal awning seem too heavy for the small single window below it. The first floor expression of elevation 2C seems slightly out of place with its material choice and detail. Consider ways to more integrate the material components within that elevation as is done with the others. If each

stick of homes will have a pre-determined façade design, please provide those full elevations for review.

**Panel Action:** Discussion only.

**Attending:**

Mark Manzo – Property owner, Skyview Development Corp  
Kaz Watanabe , Jeff Ott- Richmond American Homes  
Al Barry – AB Associates

Dr. Meany, Messrs. Bowden\*, Burns and Rubin - UDARP Panel  
Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Laurie Feinberg, Christina Hartsfield –Planning  
Dept